



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Testimony Presented Before The Appropriations And Public Health Committees

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The Department of Public Health supports the disbursement recommendations from the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund Board of Trustees for FY 2010.

The recommendations from the board are consistent with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs. Connecticut can continue to reduce the health burdens of tobacco use through evidence-based programs.

Cigarettes are one of the most heavily marketed products in the United States. Cigarette manufacturers spend millions of dollars in Connecticut to promote cigarette smoking by vulnerable populations such as youth and young adults. Counter marketing and mass media prevention campaigns together with school and community-based cessation programs will work to reduce the smoking prevalence in Connecticut. The significant increase in tobacco use among youth between the 7th and 12th grades highlights the need for a coordinated school health approach to tobacco prevention.

While these prevention measures are, of course, necessary to keep the state's youth from beginning to smoke, we must also offer assistance to those seeking help to quit. The more support an individual has in attempting to stop smoking, the more likely he or she will be successful in this effort. Ongoing community cessation programs as well as the tobacco use cessation Quitline are needed to continue the decline in tobacco use. Additionally, people with mental illness or that struggle with substance abuse issues smoke more than the general population, are more difficult to treat, and require more complex cessation programs. These groups require more intensive intervention in order to achieve the same decline in tobacco use as the public at large.

Finally, the program evaluation component of these recommendations will ensure that programs are accountable, demonstrate effectiveness, and will provide important data for future planning efforts.

The Department of Public Health appreciates the opportunity to comment on this proposal. The department is dedicated to reducing tobacco use among Connecticut residents to improve overall health, eliminate tobacco-related diseases, and reduce all residents' exposure to secondhand smoke.

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